

Opening 75 medical colleges-A brilliant move

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Dr. Gaurav Thukral, COO, Healthcare atHOME talks about how new medical colleges will benefit the country



The ambitious project of opening up 75 new medical colleges by 2021- 22, is towards getting the existing doctor patient ratio of India towards world averages. Although this announcement has been met with myriad responses, but I feel it's a masterstroke to correct the underserved medical practice in India. I had the opportunity to listen to Dr V K Paul, Member Health, Niti Ayog at the recent FICCI HEAL – annual event of FICCI Healthcare services and he explained how this humongous task would get executed at this break neck speed

With the advent of private medical colleges, a typical pattern emerged where in the infra would be invested in building a college and hospital with no patients. Further free treatment and free transport were used to fill the vacant beds. As patient numbers and procedures were the requisites for registration with MCI, this process lead to further malpractices and fake patients. All this was funded with huge capitation fee being charged by from the students who emerged with the tag of doing there MBBS on private seat.

What the government is doing is to reverse the game. It's choosing fully working and occupied district hospitals to infuse infra to make more colleges and hence more doctors at lower costs. The basic premise of having good patient load to train medical professionals is automatically sorted here. In fact this brilliant move is going to solve two big issues

As the district hospital and medical colleges combine, the problem of doctors not available in remote areas gets solved to an extent

The issue of doctors not wanting to go in underserved areas because of lack of requisite Infrastructure gets solved by infusing funds to build infrastructure for the medical colleges

Further the common NEXT examination will ensure that quality of doctors being introduced in the community is not compromised. What still needs remains unanswered is

How will we get so many teachers to train the medical students? Like in the west private practitioners will have to be roped in and incentivized to fill up these positions

Will so much influx of seats, dilute the importance of pre medical examination as what happened with Engineering Colleges in the last two decades